



MEETING MINUTES

**SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
WATER RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMISSION**

Thursday, June 7, 2007, 9:00 AM

Fern Forest Nature Center

201 Lyons Road, South

Coconut Creek, FL

Members and Alternates Present:

John Adornato

Michael Bauer

Walter Carson

Jennifer Conner

Jamie Furgang

Beverly Grady

Kristin Jacobs

Joan Lawrence

James Murley

Jim Reynolds

Terrence Rock Salt

Ray Scott

Craig Tepper

Patti Webster

Ed Wright

Jeff Ann

Al Calloway

Michael Collins

Sara Fain

Rebecca Garvoille

Patrick Hayes

Thomas Kenny

David Lithgow

Charles Pattison

Sally Robinson

Jeff Schmidt

Raymond Smith

Jeff Ward

Howard Wegis

Douglas Yoder

1. Welcome and Introductions - Michael Collins, Chair

Section 120.525, Florida Statutes, allows the District to change the published agenda for good cause shown. As Chair I find good cause to change the Agenda. Item 13, Lake Okeechobee Committee Report, will be deleted because of time and a copy was distributed. If there are any comments they can be taken up during Member Issues.

2. Member Issues, and:

Old Business: Broward County proposed motion to include reference to Broward County's Greenway and Trail System in the recreational element of the Basis of Design Report, Broward Water Preserve Areas - Chair Collins

30m

Chair Collins discussed the Everglades National Park (ENP) Preliminary Alternatives to the General Management Plan. At the current time there is not an alternative that can be supported by the boating and angling recreational users of the Park. He asked David Lithgow, Recreation Issues Chair, to schedule another meeting of the WRAC Recreation Issues workshop. Chair Collins asked that a resolution be drafted for consideration by the SFWMD Governing Board that will consider the impacts to the fishing community from closing of about 90% of the fishing area in the park. The Resolution with the draft proposal for a new alternative will be presented to the WRAC at the July meeting and at the July Governing Board meeting. We will bring a draft proposal and I will ask the WRAC for support.

Rock Salt In the Federal process we are given alternatives but sometimes the decision is already made. I know Dan Kimball is not thinking that way and is listening very carefully to the public.

Chair Collins There should have been one alternative that the community could support. The preliminary alternatives were not reviewed by the public before they were released, and I am sure Dan Kimball was surprised. It will be back to this group in July for a presentation from the ENP.

Rock Salt It is good to engage the WRAC in these issues.

John Adornato We are following this closely and one of the initiatives has to include mandatory education for boaters to understand the natural resources. If they are planning on having paddling areas only, then they should also have boating areas only.

Chair Collins You don't ban everyone from the back country. Responsible boaters don't run over canoes.

John Adornato This is a 30 year management plan, and we will all work together.

Charles Pattison asked to make a presentation at a future meeting the 50 year growth projection study released by 1,000 Friends of Florida. It has many implications for the District and especially impacts from the urbanization growth on the recharge areas for the Floridan Aquifer. In addition, he requested a briefing regarding the proposed inland port near Belle Glade, if appropriate.

Chair Collins We will take your presentation on your report for next month and will ask the port if they would present next month. Please work with Rick Smith on this.

Patrick Hayes I attended a meeting at the District and was impressed with the effort and the money being spent on the Alternative Water Supply (AWS) projects. We are going in the right direction. I would like a future agenda item on implementation of the I regional water availability rule and how the environment is doing, maybe in the fall. All of our drainage districts are under a lot of strain and I am not sure we are doing as much as we are doing with conserving the water supply.

Jennifer Conner The federal farm bill is being revised. It will change Wetland Reserve Program to 2003 appraisals at \$2000/acre versus \$6000/acre. This is very important because of the storage that will be

needed north of the lake. We proposed some language that will allow the conservationist to choose which appraisal standard to use.

Ray Scott I dont think this is going to fly and we are very concerned about the issue. Neither of the suggestions will work.

Chair Collins Two new members have been named as SFWMD Governing Board members, Pat Rooney, for Palm Beach; and, Melissa Meeker for Martin County. He gave a quick update about their backgrounds

Commissioner Jacobs discussed the Greenway Network alternative. The Greenway was part of the draft Project Implementation Report (PIR) that was approved by the SFWMD Governing Board, but at the final PIR we realized that the project ended at the foot of the levee, but the Greenway is at the top of the levee so it is not part of the project. If included in the Basic of Design Report (BODR) the two projects don't match. There is language that was given to us to resolve this issue and we are satisfied with it. Miami Dade and Palm Beach Counties have greenways so hopefully it will be a tricity greenway.

Ken Ammon Language that includes the Broward Greenway Project and educational opportunities regarding Everglades restoration will be included in the Basis Of Design Report. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be included defining the terms, conditions, and District participation, land uses, liability issues, recreational uses and other opportunities for cost sharing with other counties.

Tori White It is too late to include in the PIR as it closes for public comment June 4. Currently we are preparing a Chief Engineering Report due August 30 and a Record of Decision (ROD) will be due November 17. We are expecting that if it doesn't need any additional NEPA analysis, it will be added to the ROD. The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will share 50% in the construction cost but not in Operation and Maintenance costs. Those will be 100% funded by the District.

Rock Salt It would be ideal to include this in the Chiefs Report.

Chair Collins If approved by this committee, I will ask Ms. Wehle to present to the next Quality Review Board and we will make it a formal request. I think we can commit the Agency to start working on it to be included in the ROD.

Tori White This particular component was very expensive, when recreational costs are so expensive red flags are raised.

Commissioner Jacobs We are looking to offset the cost and we have a lot of money committed to this project.

Ray Scott Are all the other recreational opportunities identified?

Commissioner Jacobs When the time comes we will have different ways of allocating the money.

Chair Collins - By consensus and without objection, I will move this on to the Governing Board and the District staff will follow to completion. The request to the Governing Board will be to take this language and to give the Executive Director direction to work with the USACE and Broward officials to expedite.

Chair Collins introduced Shannon Estenoz as the SFWMD Governing Board Member representing Broward County.

Shannon Estenoz welcomed everyone to Broward County and Fern Forest Park. She said she is pleased that we were able to work through the language regarding the Greenway.

3. 2007 Legislative Session Wrap Up, Garrett Wallace, Director,
Legislation and Operations, SFWMD

15p 15d

Garrett Wallace presented the Legislative Update including an update on the upcoming special session on Property Tax Reform.

Walter Carson Do you have a guess about the outcome?

Garrett Wallace No, but maybe Commissioner Jacobs can provide some additional information.

Commissioner Jacobs Under the current proposal, we are looking at a possible 30% cut in our budget and a reduction of about 900 employees. We hope to find a balance. There is no agreement between the House and the Senate and that looks like good news.

Garrett Wallace There will be an addendum to the 2008 election regarding tax exemptions.

Many questions about how tax reform will affect other counties and the District.

John Adornato Where did the money go that was vetoed for the Tamiami Trail culvert cleaning project?

Chair Collins It was decided by the Governor that it was a federal project to be done by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Chip Merriam The District cleaned the culvert strictly as an O&M issue.

Commissioner Jacobs Was the money for AWS increased 50%?

Garrett Wallace Yes it was.

4. SFWMD Strategic Plan 2007 - 2017, Overview: David Gilpin-Hudson, Lead Planner, Budget Division, SFWMD

15p 15d

David Gilpin-Hudson presented on the SFWMD Strategic Plan 2007 2017

Questions and Answers:

It was suggested that language for Biscayne Bay be included in the Strategic Plan. Also question about why there is so much emphasis on the Northern Everglades?

Chair Collins The Northern Everglades is emphasized in this Plan because of Legislative direction.

5. Northern Everglades Technical Plan Update: Tom Teets, Chief Environmental Scientist, Everglades Restoration, SFWMD

15p 15d

Tom Teets presented on the Northern Everglades Plan Update.

John Adornato We are concerned about separating the northern and southern everglades. The Park needs to get some of this excess water.

Chair Collins It is a legitimate concern and we have to stay on top of it.

Jennifer Conner Have public comments started?

Tom Teets Probably sometime in the fall, one of the main concerns is not to take away water from the Kissimmee River Restoration.

James Murley Were the terms Northern and Southern Everglades, used to get legislative support?

Chair Collins Yes. Part of the education for the Legislature is to show how the northern and southern everglades restoration needs fit together as one plan from Kissimmee to the Florida Keys.

Shannon Estenoz With all the growth and permitting going on in Central Florida we need to see how it fits with the northern everglades plan. I know that Chip Merriams team is on top of this situation.

Chair Collins Consumptive use permits for the Central Florida Coordination Area will be presented to the Governing Board at the July meeting. To the degree that the Board has control of growth thru consumptive use permits, we will stay on top of it.

6. Proposed Revisions to Long Term Plan to Achieve Water Quality Goals - Update: Tracey Piccone, Chief Consulting Engineer, Stormwater Treatment Area (STA) Management Division, and Mike Hind, Project Manager, Everglades Restoration, SFWMD

15p 15d

Tracey Piccone gave an update on the Compartment B project. This will be presented to Governing Board next week for a resolution. She introduced Mike Hind who presented on Compartment B.

Questions and Answers:

Thomas Kenny - Was the change of the pumps because of noise control?

Mike Hind Yes, it was for noise control, diesel pumps are louder. The electric pumps are quieter but will have diesel back up.

Rebecca Garvoille - Is it part of the purpose of this project to remove phosphorus, do you have a %? Is there a goal?

Tracey Piccone We have stopped all direct discharges of untreated water to the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge. , That water will now go north into the Stormwater Treatment Area for treatment. We will have to meet the same standards as for water going into Everglades National Park.

Jim Reynolds What are the benefits of the electric pumps?

Mike Hind They are smaller and they have a smaller footprint. The Village of Wellington will eventually take over O&M the pumps. We are trying to size down t the impoundment to achieve better cost/benefits.

7. Lunch - 11:45 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

45m

8. Storm Water Treatment Area Compartment B Buildout - Basis of Design Report Overview - Mike Hind, Project Manager, Everglades Restoration, SFWMD

15p 15d

Mike Hind presented on Stormwater Treatment Area (STA) BODR Compartment B Build out.

Questions and Answers:

Thomas Kenny Are flows by gravity? Will Mod. Waters help with gravity flow?

Ken Ammon Most flows to the south are driven by pump stations. From the EAA there is still some gravity, from Lake Okeechobee to the south we have to pump.

DEP - The bigger pumps, will it take away from the smaller pump?

Mike Hind From an engineering point of view they both can work at peak capacity at the same time.

Jeff Ward I see no changes or new canals in this design. Where is the conveyance change in this design to get water to Compartment B?

Mike Hind The (is this right U canals?) U Canals are the effective collectors at the ends of the system and the new spreader canals will spread the water evenly across the cells.

Ken Ammon Compartment B will enhance existing STAs and conservation areas without further improvement needed; so the project will be built out and we will follow up in the future with and evaluate any conveyance improvements.

9. Aquifer Storage and Recovery and Deep Well Update - Robert Verrastro, Lead Hydrogeologist, Water Supply Divison, SFWMD

15p 15d

Bob Verrastro presented on Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) and Deep Well Injection.

There were questions on some of the ASR pilot projects and the testing being done.

John Adornato asked for the USACE to present to the WRAC on ASR.

Chair Collins One of the benefits of ASR and Deep Well is to be able, during the rainy season, to inject into the Floridan Aquifer instead of the estuaries when salinity is dropping and the oyster beds may be endangered.

David Lithgow recommended recreation opportunities and wildlife enhancements to the Paradise Run marsh and recommended that the District recreation staff work with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWCC) to restore waterfowl and wading bird populations.

10. Aquifer Storage and Recovery Contingency Plan -- John Morgan, Jr., Senior Technical Program Specialist, CERP Planning Dept., SFWMD

15p 15d

John Morgan presented on Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) Contingency Plan.

Jeff Ward If the wells dont work, how many acres of surface water will be needed to replace them?

John Morgan - That is part of the analysis in the Contingency Plan.

Chair Collins We are going to make it work because there is not enough land and at this time we cant afford it.

Bob Verrastro The pilot projects will give us the answers that we need.

Chair Collins We will keep this group engaged and we will bring it back when there is new information.

Patrick Hayes For ASR and Deep Well the efficiency recovery rate is irrelevant, the purpose is to relieve the estuaries and recharge the aquifer. What target range are you looking at for agricultural or consumptive use?

John Morgan The technical work that Bob is doing will give us those answers.

Ray Scott The Contingency Plan is is taking a very long time.

Chair Collins Until the study is done we dont know what we are doing the contingency for. We have to have a better answer on the efficiency of ASR.

Shannon Estenoz In the pilot study, what answers are we getting that will be broadly applicable to ASR? At what time of the testing can we say whether ASR can be fully implemented?

Bob Verrastro The regional benefits will be ecological. We will be running tests to see how well it interacts with the ecology.

Shannon Estenoz Might we see more water quality issues in the north that we dont see in the south?

Bob Verrastro Yes there is the arsenic concern and whether these east coast wells will have arsenic issues like other wells.

Shannon Estenoz Where are we with the USACE ASRs?

John Morgan They are being done, Port Mayaca and Kissimmee.

11. Decompartmentalization Project Overview: John Leslie, III, Decomp Project Manager, CERP; and Decomp. Physical Model: Fred Sklar, Chief Environmental Scientist, Everglades Division, SFWMD

20p 25d

John Leslie III and Fred Sklar presented on Decompartmentalization Project Overview

Questions and Answers:

Shannon Estenoz - Have you considered the impacts of creating interim conditions that will change?

Fred Sklar They are constraints and we can shut down this experiment at any time if we exceed any of the constraints.

Tori White The Project Implementation Report (PIR) will consider the impacts to all sides: Endangered Species Act, flooding, etc.

Chair Collins The models we have selected take all of these impacts into consideration.

Dewey Worth We are working within the constraints of the Combined Structural and Operational Plan (CSOP). All negative impacts, whether environmental or urban because of seepage, have to be included in the environmental assessment.

John Adornato As this plan moves forward we have to make sure all other aspects are evaluated. We want to see what the new plan is as a whole package.

Chair Collins We have limited resources. To move the Tamiami Trail bridge north will create a whole new process and a delay of three more years. The C-111 and spreader canal projects have been delayed for 4 years because of changes from the Park and environmental community.

Shannon Estenoz Is there so much uncertainty about the benefits of decompartmentalization?

Chair Collins This model is the result of public comments from our stakeholders, like the South Florida Anglers for Environmental Restoration (SAFER) group that wanted quantitative and qualitative information regarding water quality.

David Lithgow We had this presentation at the WRAC Recreation Workshop and SAFER is on board with this model. I suggest we take the material from the levee removal and create artificial tree islands from that material.

Shannon Estenoz Havent we created artificial tree islands?

Dewey Worth In the 70s the FWCC created artificial tree islands in WCA-3B. They look like tree islands and the trees grow like they do on tree islands.

David Lithgow - The chart that I have seen from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) doesnt look like the SFWMD chart as it takes into consideration the population of the Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow.

Chair Collins - The jeopardy opinion for the sparrow conflicts with the Everglades restoration and we dont have an answer yet from the USFWS.

Newton Cook The Decompartmentalization Study was a direct result of listening to the stakeholders and we want to thank Fred Sklar and the staff of the SFWMD. Lets just make sure that as we go thru with decompartmentalization we dont make things worse.

12. Recreation on Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs) - 2007 Waterfowl Hunting Season: Jerry Krenz, Everglades Recreation Program Director, Land Stewardship Division, SFWMD

5p 10d

Jerry Krenz presented on Recreation on Stormwater Treatment Area (STA) and would like to ask approval from the Governing Board for the 2007 Waterfowl Hunting Season.

Q: Where will hunting in STA-5 be allowed?

A: The most hunted is the NE corner.

Chair Collins - Approval to take to the Governing Board without objection.

Newton Cook Thanks to the SFWMD and the staff for moving this along and for working with the FWCC and USFWS on the American bald eagle issues on STA-2. STA- 5 is the number one public site for water fowl hunting.

13. Lake Okeechobee Committee Report - Rick Smith, WRAC Facilitator

5p 10d

14. Adjourn: 3:45p.m.